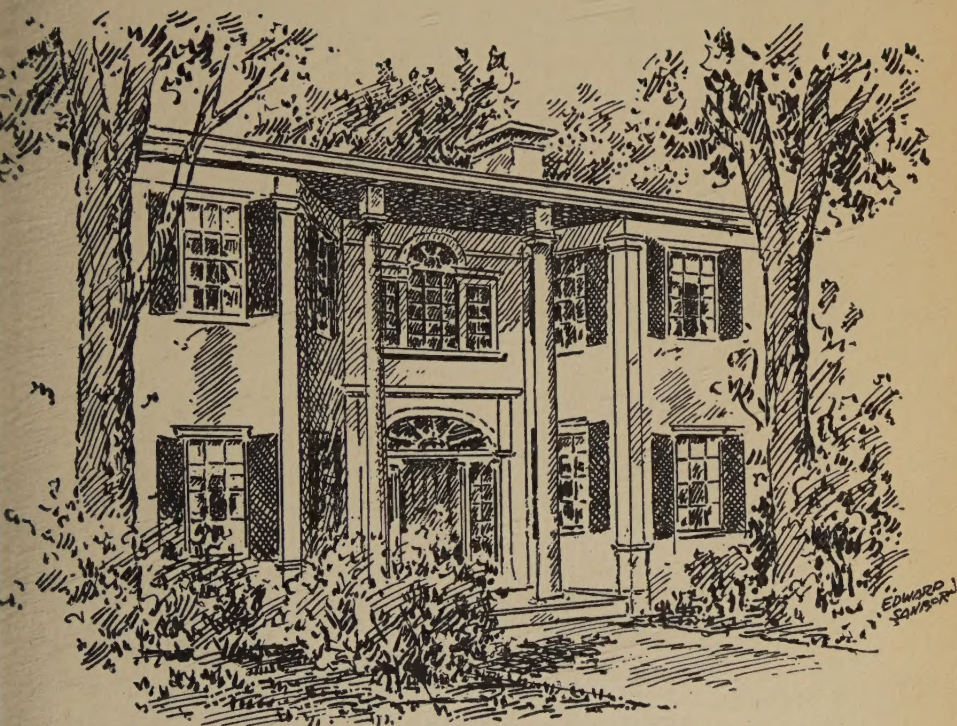


VERMONT *Quarterly*



LANGDON-COLE HOUSE, CASTLETON

VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. XVII

No. 2-3



APRIL-JULY

1949

VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MONTPELIER, VERMONT

LEON S. GAY, *President*

Cavendish, Vermont

ELBERT S. BRIGHAM, *Vice President*

CLARA E. FOLLETTE, *Secretary*

ARTHUR W. PEACH, *Vice President*

LUMAN B. HOWE, *Treasurer*

JOHN CLEMENT, *Vice President*

Board of Curators

GEORGE H. AMIDON, *Montpelier*

MORTIMER R. PROCTOR, *Proctor*

ELBERT S. BRIGHAM, *Montpelier*

RALPH W. PUTNAM, *Waterbury*

HORACE BROWN, *Springfield*

DOROTHY RANDOLPH, *Montpelier*

JOHN CLEMENT, *Rutland*

HAROLD G. RUGG, *Hanover, N. H.*

LEON W. DEAN, *Burlington*

GEORGE RUSSELL, *Arlington*

WALTER HARD, *Manchester*

CURTIS R. SMITH, *St. Albans*

RALPH N. HILL JR., *Burlington*

WILLIAM J. WILGUS, *Claremont, N. H.*

IDA B. HORTON, *Montpelier*

JOHN C. HUDEN, *Castleton*

Ex Officio Members

DORMAN B. E. KENT, *Montpelier*

LEON S. GAY, *President*

JOHN H. MCDILL, *Woodstock*

HARRISON J. CONANT, *State Librarian*

VINCENT B. MALONEY, *Winooski*

HELEN E. BURBANK, *Secretary of State*

VREST ORTON, *Weston*

DAVID V. ANDERSON, *Auditor*

ARTHUR W. PEACH, *Northfield*

EARLE WILLIAMS NEWTON, *Director*

CLARA E. FOLLETTE, *Assistant to the Director*

PLINY F. MORSE, *Custodian*

MARTHA C. PARSONS, *Secretary to the Director*

The Vermont Historical Society is both an archives of invaluable material for the study of community, state and nation, and an educational institution promoting the study of and research in history as a way of approach to the problems of man in his relation to society. It performs for the State of Vermont its historical function, and is the Official state historical society, occupying quarters in the State Library and Supreme Court Building, where it maintains its library, manuscript collections, and the State Museum.

It is supported both by state appropriation and by private endowment. Bequests and gifts, either of funds, of books and manuscripts, or of relics, are welcomed. The Society, through its educational activities, its publications, and its program of preservation of historical materials, serves a membership of over seven hundred as well as the citizens of Vermont. Its resorces are open to any serious student between the hours of 8 A.M. and 4:30 P.M., except Saturdays and Sundays.

You and your friends are cordially invited to join the Society and thereby further its aims and objectives. Membership (three dollars) brings with it a yearly subscription to the VERMONT QUARTERLY, as well as special publication discounts.

NEW SERIES

• Price 75 cents

• VOL. XVII No. 2-3

VERMONT *Quarterly*

A MAGAZINE OF HISTORY



April-July 1949

PUBLISHED BY THE
VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Montpelier

ILLUSTRATIONS

	<i>Facing page</i>
1. Dake Homestead, Entrance Porch (Photo by Rugg)	42
2. Meacham-Ainsworth House, Entrance Porch	43
3. Dake Homestead, Stairway	46
4. Dake Homestead, Detail of Stairs	46
5. Granger-Ransom House, Stairway	47
6. Mallory-Jones House, Detail of North Front	50
7. Mallory-Jones House, West End and North Front	51
8. Mallory-Jones House, Hall and Stairs	51
9. Dr. Clark House, Entrance Hall	51
10. Harris-Ward House, Detail of Exterior	54
11. Langdon-Cole House, Exterior from Southwest	center
12. Langdon-Cole House, Entrance Hall	center
13. Marcus Langdon House, Exterior from Northeast (photo c. 1880)	center
14. Langdon-Cole House, Entrance Bay	55
15. Langdon-Cole House, Dining Room Mantel	58
16. Langdon-Cole House, Drawing Room Mantel	58
17. Langdon-Cole House, Study Mantel	58
18. Federated Church, Exterior	59
19. Federated Church, Pulpit	62
20. Federated Church, Detail of Pulpit	62
21. Ransom House (Manse) Exterior	63
22. Ransom House (Manse), Stairway	66
23. Sideboard made by Dake, date unknown.	67

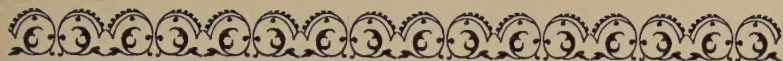
EARLE WILLIAMS NEWTON, *Editor*

VERMONT QUARTERLY: *a Magazine of History*, published by the Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier, Vermont. Editorial and Business Offices: State House, Montpelier, Vermont.

Entered as second-class matter December 31, 1947 at the post office at Woodstock, Vermont under the Act of August 24, 1912. Application made for re-entry at the post office at Burlington, Vermont.

This quarterly publication is supplied to members as a part of annual dues (\$3.00 and \$5.00) and is available on subscription at \$3.00 per year.
Single copies, 75 cents.

Printed by the Lane Press, Burlington, Vermont.



Dake of Castleton

HOUSE-JOINER EXTRAORDINARY

By HERBERT WHEATON CONGDON

I.

HOUSE-JOINER. That was the way Thomas R. Dake described himself back in the early 1800s, the period in which he made over a Vermont village. Today we would rightly call him an architect and esteem him Vermont's most brilliant practitioner of that ancient art during the first quarter of the Nineteenth Century . . . and the least known.

Architects, as they are defined today, were practically nonexistent in Vermont a century-and-a-half ago. We accept them as specialists in planning, products of college and university who, like lawyers and physicians, have undergone lengthy instruction and education, served their internship and finally (in many States) have been licensed to practise their profession. Too often they are forced to become men of drawing-board and office, their creative work taking shape under the supervision of a corps of technicians. Few could saw a straight cut, lay a brick or join timbers with mortise-and-tenon. To contract for the erection of the building they have designed is forbidden by the Code of Professional Ethics.

The diploma, gown and hood of the Master's degree seem empty honors when compared to the "forty dollars worth of carpenter's and joiner's tools, with two suits of clothes, one suitable for publick days" that were once the customary award. Beyond the award lay the reward, seeing the child of his brain take shape through the labor of his own hands helped by his journeymen and apprentices under his immediate, personal, supervision and manual participation every minute of the long days until it was completed.

The master house-joiner was truly the architect, *archi-tekton*, literally the master-builder. Like his helpers, he was frequently employed by the day; but he was the Master! Often it was he who went into the snow-carpeted forests and cut great first-growth pines of his choosing. It was he who hewed and laid out the sturdy roof-trusses, making the first as a pattern for the others. It was he who

cunningly devised the gracefully curving spiral staircase, self-sustaining and as solid as a rock. He designed *and made* the best-room mantel with its wide panel above the shelf that fitted a cherished family portrait. Intricate geometry was a plaything. He had learned from his Master in apprentice-days the secrets of proportion and the principles of sound construction. He knew his trade as well as his art.

Today we wonder how it came about that those old houses are so good architecturally. They may be Quaker-plain, but the inter-relationship of wall and opening and slope of roof, the charm and suitability of rooms, have little likeness to the vernacular architecture of the present. Our sense of proportion is blunted. We feel it is hardly worth the trouble to get sash and doors that are just right for their places, now that they come ready-made, especially if it means delay. "I don't care what the house looks like," says my client, "if it keeps me warm and dry and doesn't cost much." The women's magazines are filled with clever subterfuges of decoration and furnishing that will minimize bad proportions and wrongly placed openings.

Fundamentally, then, the charm of the old houses is due to the fact that the people who built them . . . and those who paid for them . . . *did* care. But that does not wholly explain how "common carpenters" did such beautiful work nor why in the brief decade that centered around 1850 the standards of good taste in architecture (and other arts) fell to such lamentably low levels. It is encouraging to find them slowly rising now, at least among Vermont's country carpenters . . . and their customers, too!

Of course these carpenters were not equally gifted. They might be roughly classified as (a) farm-folk compelled by circumstances to be able to "do anything," turning out really good carpentry in fine proportion but with no thought of beautification, (b) men who had gone through an apprenticeship which had given them not only manual skill but an understanding of design in its various branches, and (c) those who had developed inventive genius in design over and above a mere ability to copy, who were able to amplify the germ-idea of their pattern. It is noteworthy, however, that all the men in these classifications possessed in a high degree a feeling for good proportion, that has since become unusual. Dake belongs in the third class. He was an inventive genius of great brilliance, as well as a master-craftsman in wood. For those who are concerned with Heredity and Environment as influencing adult life, the following information has been collected and deductions drawn. Factual material is backed by references and circumstantial evidence. Mere guesswork is identified in the text as

clearly as possible. The illustrations of Dake's work are, of course, important as direct evidence. It is unfortunate that buildings cannot always be definitely dated. Town Land Records cover only transfers of land "with buildings thereon." In some cases dates are frankly derived from the architectural evidence where neither diaries nor records are available.

II.

In contradiction of the Biblical proverb, Dake is more honored in the village where he spent most of his life than elsewhere. Legends have gathered about his memory, legends that do not stand up even to amateur research. The "American Guide Series" book on Vermont calls him Thomas *Royal* Dake, following local tradition. Dake himself never used a middle name, not always his rightful middle initial "R," as attested by numerous documents bearing his signature and filed in the office of the Town Clerk of Castleton. His father was no silversmith as the local tradition states, but an industrious farmer and active land-trader in the "West Parish" of Windsor, Vermont. Dake did not emigrate to Ohio, as some stories go, but his son Thomas C. did; the names have been confused. The origin of these attractive myths seem to be due to letters from a granddaughter of Dake's, the late Mrs. James J. Goodale of Cleveland, Ohio, a daughter of Thomas Ceylon Dake. These letters were written to the late Miss Mary Gerrish Higley of Castleton, an enthusiastic collector of Castletoniana and admirer of Dake the architect. Miss Higley's valuable collections, at her death, were divided between the Secretary of the Federated Church congregation and Mrs. Hulda Cole, librarian of the Castleton Teachers College. Some letters etc., were destroyed at Miss Higley's request. It is said they were not of historical significance.

The letter mentioned above is dated at Cleveland, Ohio, December 12, 1921. After personal introductory matter there are several apologies for "poor memory" and mention of assistance from Mr. Goodale (not a Dake descendant) whose memory is said to be "better for genealogical matters," which do not interest her. "All I distinctly remember" the letter says "is the fact that two Dakes came over from England in 1680 and settled in Connecticut." Several other bits of genealogical data are then given (mostly in agreement with accepted records), the middle name is given as "Royal" for Thomas R. Dake, his father is said to have been a silversmith, and the letter draws toward a close with the statement misunderstood by Miss Higley "Grandfather was married a second time and she is the Grandmother

I remember, for we lived in Ohio." He may have visited there, or they may have visited in Castleton. The Castleton tax records and land records show him a resident of that village until his death in 1852.

Now for facts. Our Thomas Dake's grandfather was a physician, Dr. John Dake. Old records spell the surname with charming inconsistency Deake and Deak also. Dr. John Dake married Hannah Foster¹ and practised in Hopkinton, Rhode Island. Both he and his wife seem to have been of Rhode Island families. They had at least three children. The present study is concerned only with the first three, John, Joseph and Benjamin, for all three in due time emigrated to the new settlement, Windsor, Vermont, on the bank of the Connecticut River.

Benjamin Dake, son of Dr. John, was born in Hopkinton, R. I., November 27, 1753 and married Elizabeth Reynolds March 23, 1779, at South Kingstown (Kingston today) the Rev. Emmanuel Case, Assistant, officiating.² The young couple seem to have lived there for a short time, and it may be guessed that he was a farmer as that part of the present Town is still a farming community with its tiny village, South Kingston. Their first child was born there, a year later, and named George Washington Dake. Benjamin's elder brothers had already gone to Windsor and it may be guessed that they wrote back with persuasive enthusiasm to him, for he followed them to Windsor³ and had settled there in time for his second son, Benjamin Foster Dake, to be born in Windsor, Vermont, in 1782.⁵

The third son born to Benjamin Dake and Elizabeth Reynolds his wife was THOMAS REYNOLDS DAKE, the full name and date of birth, December 22, 1785, being in the Windsor Town Records. Benjamin and his family lived in what was then called "the West Parish" of Windsor. It is now a separate township, West Windsor, a place of hill-farms and forest land, a small village called Brownsville and a couple of named localities, Hammondville and Sheddsville. There are the usual number of small family burying grounds and almost-deserted cemeteries. In one of these no doubt are the graves of Benjamin, his wife, and possibly some children. Farm land that is going back to forest is difficult to explore for old gravestones. Those of the Dakes have not yet been found.

¹ Foster Genealogy, by Frederick C. Pierce, page 709.

² Rhode Island Vital Records, volume V.

³ "Descendants of John Dake," New York Genealogical and Biographical Records, volume 56, page 344.

⁵ Windsor, Vermont, Town Records.



Fig. 1 DAKE HOMESTEAD, ENTRANCE PORCH
(Photo by Rugg)



Fig. 2 MEACHAM-AINSWORTH HOUSE, ENTRANCE PORCH

The three original Dake men settling in Windsor seem to have differed considerably in personality and citizenship. John, the oldest, was a prominent citizen, holding various public offices, one of which was Surveyor. One of his successors in this office was Asher Benjamin, later to be known as a famous architect and author in Massachusetts. When John Dake died March 22, 1791, he had a big funeral and suitable publicity in the Windsor newspaper which called him "Dake the Pioneer." Incidentally, this newspaper, *The Vermont Journal*, is still being published and has furnished from its fragile old files a good deal of information and background material.

Of Joseph Dake almost nothing is known. There are records of his children and of John's, but he seems to have been a quiet and retiring man.

Benjamin Dake had been a private with Rhode Island troops⁴ and was on the Windsor payroll as a Revolutionary soldier in 1781⁵ and was granted a pension in Windsor in 1832.⁴ Apparently esteemed as a farmer, he was elected Hog Reeve in 1782 and served on a Petty (sic) Jury in the same year.⁵ He is thought to have died in 1835. There is every indication that he was a farmer all his life, but the Windsor Land Records show that he was also an active land-trader in what is now the Town of West Windsor.

The settlement of Windsor began about 1764 and to a large degree in the vicinity of the Connecticut River. The back country, the West Parish, was exceedingly hilly and very heavily forested. The settlement showed by census sixteen families by the end of 1765. In 1791 there were 1,542 inhabitants and in 1820 the official census showed 2,950 persons, the largest Town in Vermont. Under such conditions there would be a demand for timber . . . and a good chance to add to a farmer's income by land trading. It is not unlikely that Benjamin Dake became prosperous, and that he could do well by his children.

It is beyond the scope of this study to follow the fortunes of his two older sons, George and the younger Benjamin. Our present concern is with the third, Thomas.

III.

The boyhood and youth of Thomas R. Dake is quite unknown. Presumably he went to a "little red schoolhouse" not too far from his farm home. It can be inferred that in a rapidly growing community he may have been fascinated by the sight of men at work on new

⁴ Lineage Book, Daughters of the American Revolution, volume 124, page 108.

houses. It is not impossible that his father had the means and the desire to build a new and finer farm-home during Thomas' formative years. It is obvious that *something* drew him away from farm-life to the "art, trade and mastery of house-carpenter and joiner," to quote from an indenture he made with a youth many years later. The first definite fact that we have of his adult life is in the records of the Town of Castleton, Vermont, the statement that he took the Freeman's Oath on September 1, 1807. This Oath is required of all citizens on attaining their majority as a prerequisite to voting. The date was the first Tuesday in September which at that time was Election Day. There was no requirement for a definite previous residence within the County or Town then, so he appeared before the Selectmen, properly introduced of course, and was sworn in. As simple as that!

In view of the great importance of Town Meeting among all Vermonters, habitually held in March, it seems almost certain that he had not reached Castleton at that time or he would have taken the Oath then, as he had reached his majority the previous December. He may not have come directly from Windsor to Castleton. He may have been out of the state, learning his trade, as discussed later.

Whenever it was that he reached Castleton, legend has it that he worked for—or with—Jonathan Deming, a well-established master-builder and member of the local Congregational Church. Deming knew his trade thoroughly, but lacked inventive genius—ability to design. He seems to have accepted Dake, not as an apprentice, but as a master workman on whom he could rely for design, ornament and the more elaborate forms of joinery. Dake may even have lived in the family as an apprentice would. The book of records of the Congregational Church, volume 1, lists Thomas R. Dake as signing the Society's Articles. Nowhere is there a record of any apprenticeship having been served by young Thomas Dake. These agreements, called "indentures," were made between the parent of the apprentice, usually 16 years old, with a master for the five year period until the lad attained his majority. In early days the document was torn in two, half being retained by each party to the contract. The matching together of the jagged, toothy edge (whence the name indenture) proved the authenticity of the paper. With the development of careful and official record-keeping this custom died out and the indenture was often, but by no means always, filed with the Town Clerk. At this critical period of Thomas Dake's life we are faced by problems that cannot be solved by the accepted means of letters, diaries, or official records. The latter are few. No diaries or letters have been found. So, from a minimum of

known facts and the direct evidence of the houses built by Dake in Castleton shortly after his arrival there, we may weave our tapestry from the few facts on a warp and woof of deduction, intelligent guesswork.

Young Dake's education, it seems fair to say, was a major factor. His reasons for abandoning farming for building we shall probably never know. Having made that choice, any ambitious young man would seek fertile fields to work. Why not Windsor, seething with activity, growing fast? It had better communications, by the river, than most Vermont towns. There was prosperous farmland across the river in New Hampshire. Why not one of the other river-towns if he wanted to strike out in new fields? That, too, we shall never know. We can draw inferences from Castleton legends and a very few old letters, even from scattered entries in old books of accounts, that he was a quiet, introspective man, leaning on others to an extent. Success then as now depended on Push and Pull and possibly he preferred the second quality.

Therefore, the next strand from the scanty but tangled skein has to do with another family, the Langdons. Down in Farmington, Conn., Ebenezer Lankton (as it was then spelled) was born May 20, 1738. He married Katharine Green of the same town, who was born June 2, 1742. They had six children: Ira, 1761; Chaunsee, (who later spelled his name "Chauncy"), born November 8, 1763 (of whom more later); Gad, born July 6, 1767; Bulah (sic) born April 26, 1769; Mary, born December 3, 1771 and Ebenezer (jr.) born March 4, 1775 who married Polly Stocking of Berlin, Conn., date unknown. She was born September 17, 1775 and died February 6, 1865. Ebenezer jr. died in Castleton, Vermont, September 18, 1849. This information is from old Langdon family papers which authenticate their information by the statement that dates of birth and death are copied from headstones, mostly in the cemetery at Sheddsville, in what is now West Windsor. These dates seem to be confirmed by the Vermont Vital Statistics Office, which add pertinent information as to death-dates and burial place. Ebenezer sr. in these records is given the middle initial R, and his death-date December 25, 1826, his place of burial, Sheddsville Cemetery, West Windsor. This is nearly two years after he had brought suit against Selah Gridley of Castleton to collect a debt⁶ wherein he is described as "of Windsor." Langdon family papers state that Ebenezer sr. and his family moved from

⁶ Castleton, Vermont, Town Records, Book VI, page 381.

Farmington, Conn., to Windsor in 1790. The 1790 Census of Windsor, Vermont, records Ira Langdon (Ebenezer sr.'s older son), his wife and a daughter. Ebenezer jr. does not appear in it until 1800 and then only two of his children are listed. Probably the others were by that time married. Ebenezer jr. is listed with his wife and two children, a boy and a girl, the boy being Marcus, born in (West) Windsor August 25, 1801, died in Castleton November 29, 1864.⁷ Two of these Langdons are significant elements of the Dake problem.

Chauncy (sic), the second son of Ebenezer Langdon sr., seems to have been a brilliant man. He graduated from Yale in 1792, studied law in Hebron, Conn. (about 25 miles from Farmington, his birth-place) and at about the time his parents moved to Windsor, Vermont, he went to Castleton, Vermont, where he practised law.¹⁰ He seems to have had faith in the future of Castleton, a faith justified by his later success there, and perhaps he influenced his brother Ebenezer jr. to move to Castleton with his wife and young children.

Ebenezer was about twelve years younger than Chauncy. On his arrival in Castleton in 1803 he developed a water-power on the outskirts of the village. He seems to have made many friends, for in 1812 he was sent as the Town's representative to the Vermont Legislature. His older brother, Chauncy, succeeded him and served in that capacity in 1813, 1814, and from 1819 to 1822. Chauncy had previously served as Judge of Probate, 1799-1800.⁸ Ebenezer seems to have done some farming and dealt in wool, perhaps raising sheep too.

So much for fact. It is to be remembered that the Langdons and Benjamin Dake's family had been neighbors in West Windsor, a small community. Both families farmed and "traded land." It may be surmised that Ebenezer jr., pleased with his own success based on his move to Castleton, urged young Thomas Dake to "go West, young man" and follow the Langdon's lead. The wise and popular Chauncy may have had something to do with it, too, for it is at least probable

⁷ Vermont Vital Statistics (a card file in the Secretary of State's office in Montpelier. This purports to be copies of Town Records but it is found that there are discrepancies in names. E.g., Thomas R. Dake's first wife Sally Deming is entered as "Adaline" which does not agree with the Castleton Records nor with inscription on headstone.)

⁸ Vermont Historical Gazetteer, by Abby Maria Hemenway, volume III, pages 515 to 519. Published 1871.

This is "a priceless hodge-podge of town history, biography and anecdote preserved by the indomitable and unselfish enthusiasm of one Vermont spinster. Windsor County is lacking." References to "Hemenway" are to this monumental work.

¹⁰ Steele's "History of Castleton" in Hemenway's Gazetteer volume III.



Fig. 3 DAKE HOMESTEAD, STAIRWAY
Fig. 4 DAKE HOMESTEAD, DETAIL OF STAIRS



Fig. 5 GRANGER-RANSOM HOUSE, STAIRWAY

that he visited his father, Ebenezer sr., on the farm home in West Windsor. The Town is small, so this could not have been far distant from Benjamin Dake's dwelling. For the same reason the children may have been at least acquainted with one another. These two Langdon men were making money. They may have craved handsomer homes than could be built by the Castleton house-carpenters. Perhaps they were impressed by young Thomas Dake's education which is such a mystery to us. It may be significant that Dake built homes for the young scions of these two Langdons. It may be that Thomas Dake felt the "pull." We know that he went to Castleton only four years after Ebenezer jr. did. We can only guess at his reasons.

The mystery of young Dake's education in the "art or trade of house carpenter and joiner" cannot be solved at the present. Here, too, there are certain significant facts and the direct evidence of the buildings he designed and built, which may be used as bases for intelligent guesswork.

Windsor village has its South Meeting House of great beauty and distinction. It had a number of very beautiful and ornate houses built for wealthy citizens of which there are some relics left. These were erected in the closing years of the last decade of the Seventeenth Century and in the first decade of the Eighteenth, the work of the distinguished master-builder, Asher Benjamin of Greenfield, Mass., who spent several years in Windsor.⁹ He was something of a wanderer, and judging by the larger number of buildings he designed in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont, was a good business-getter. He was also something of a missionary, eager to teach others what he knew. He wrote, illustrated and published six books on architecture inspired by some of the English publications like those of the Brothers Adam.

The *Windsor Gazette*, a weekly newspaper now called *The Vermont Journal*, carried the following advertisement in its issue for January 5, 1802 and the three succeeding ones:—

TO YOUNG CARPENTERS, JOINERS AND ALL OTHERS
CONCERNED IN THE ART OF BUILDING:—

The Subscriber intends to open a School of Architecture at his house in Windsor, the 20th of February next—at which will be taught THE FIVE ORDERS OF ARCHITECTURE the Proportions

⁹ American Guide Series, "Vermont," a part of the Federal Writers Project WPA. This volume published 1937.

of Doors, Windows and Chimneypieces, the construction of Stairs, with their ramp and twist, Rails, the method of framing timbers, length and backing of Hiprafters, the tracing of Groins to Angle Brackets, circular soffits in circular Walls; Plans, Elevations and Sections of Houses, with all their Ornaments.

The Art of drawing Plans and Elevations, or any other figure perspective will also be taught if required

by

ASHER BENJAMIN

December 28, 1801

There is no reference to these advertisements in the news columns of the paper. It is not known whether the "school" died a-borning or succeeded to some degree in Windsor or elsewhere. Benjamin sold his house in Windsor and left that village within a year or two after his effort to start America's first School of Architecture, the date of his departure being conjectural.

To seize some flimsy clues, consider the opportunities that young Thomas Dake might have had for instruction by Asher Benjamin. The lad was sixteen years old when Benjamin's advertisement was first published, the usual age for apprenticing with a view to "graduating" at twenty-one, majority. His uncle, John Dake, was a pioneer settler of Windsor, prominent, popular, and well-to-do. Caleb and John Benjamin were also pioneers of the settlement. No connection has been proven between Asher and either of them, nor is Asher Benjamin's father known. What brought Asher to this frontier village, rapidly growing in wealth and population, away from his many commissions and connections in the "civilized" States down the Connecticut River?

It is a fascinating mass of material for fiction; the talented youngster, Tom Dake, his kindly, plodding elder brothers and indulgent father, the brilliant teacher from the south, all ending in apprenticeship with Asher Benjamin as his Master. The loyal apprentice departs with his Master when the school-project fails, and attains his majority while Benjamin is completing the Charles St. Church in Boston, getting home too late for the 1807 Windsor Town Meeting, then going over to Castleton during the summer to help worthy, unschooled and aging Jonathan Deming, friend of Dake's former neighbors, the prosperous and influential Langdons. The only trouble with it is that not a record can be uncovered as a foundation for the flimsy tissue of

possibilities. Let us go back to Castleton and sober fact; Thomas Dake at the age of 21 was a well-trained architect.

IV.

Castleton was settled largely from Connecticut. Col. Bird's first visit from his home in Salisbury, Conn., was made in 1767 by way of Bennington and Manchester, where the road ended. Beyond that lay Rutland, over thirty miles of blazed trails. From what is today Vermont's second largest city he went westerly, but lost his way and came out at Whitehall, circling back to where placid Castleton dozes nowadays. By 1775 the new settlement counted thirty families and eight or ten unattached souls. Israel Buel, the first child born there, was the son of Ephraim.¹⁰ About forty years later the Buel Block was built, the brick building that houses town offices and still bears the old sign, carefully repainted, "G. Buel, Hat and Cap Store," a puzzle to tourists in search of headgear.

When Thomas R. Dake reached Castleton, Israel Buel, if still an inhabitant, would have been only thirty-five years of age. It was a new town and the people of the village were sure it was going to be an important one. Arunah Hyde with his dreams of making it the stage-coach center of the State was nearly a quarter-century in the future. There is a list of the local business men, probably made up about 1810¹⁰ but without mention of the source of the information. It includes under the heading "Carpenters and Joiners" Jonathan Deming, Mr. Thompson, John Houghton, N. Granger, T. R. Dake, Freedom Brown, Clark Stevens & Son. There is no explanation of the sequence. Deming and Granger belong in the Dake story.

The Demings were among the first settlers of Castleton, coming up from Connecticut where Jonathan was born in 1756. He had two wives, Ann, who did not live very long, and Jane, who was born in 1761 and died August 29, 1828. Jonathan outlived her, dying April 16, 1836.¹¹ There were a number of children, among them a son Wait who died August 5, 1817 at the age of 26, and the young physician, Luther, who died at the age of 31, January 4, 1829; and of course Sally.

Jonathan Deming seems to have been a lovable character, an upright and a patient man. A carpenter and joiner by trade, a skilled workman but with little artistic sense, he built the first Congregational Meeting House. This was begun in 1789 and was a long time building due to

¹¹ Gravestones in Castleton Town Burying Ground adjoining the Federated Church on its easterly side.

constant squabbles with and among the church authorities. The tale of their first "settled minister," out of place here, is both comedy and tragedy but with Deming's troubles gives color to inference that both men had to deal with some extremely rugged individualists whose spiritual virtues were not obvious. The Church account books show that Deming was consistently paid less than his bills called for, for example. Yet with all these troubles, Jonathan continued his religious work in the parish, his donations to its support, and his work for it as a carpenter.

Two years after he had taken the Freeman's Oath Thomas R. Dake married Sally Deming, September 24, 1809,¹² daughter of his employer Jonathan Deming. He built his homestead on South Street for his bride according to custom. This was the first of his Castleton houses. It is a simple dwelling, not greatly changed from its original appearance. To be sure, the former northwest ell is gone as are all but one fireplace. There remains an interesting arch framing a door into that ell. It may have led to his office.

The chief feature of the plain exterior was the entrance porch on the easterly front (fig. 1). The distinctive porch was removed recently, too decrepit for repair. It is important as the earliest evidence of his eagerness to depart from tradition and also because it was copied in elaborated form in the first house he is known to have designed for a client, the wealthy merchant John Meacham. Later known as the Meacham-Ainsworth house, it is on the main street and is now a tourist home, "1810 House," so called from the date of its erection.

It may be surmised that a cautious businessman would investigate so young a man as Dake very carefully before intrusting him with the building of a mansion. Probably he visited the Dake homestead. If so, he seems to have liked it and far from being repelled by the unusual entrance porch, willingly accepted its design with suitable modifications. As built for Meacham it is of the Corinthian Order instead of Doric, its upper part enriched by carved swags and garlands, smaller repetitions of those used in the frieze of the main entablature (fig. 2) and with more ornate leading in the side-lights of the entrance doorway than Dake had used in his own home. It may be significant that Dake used similar ornamentation in the Harris house which some think he built about 1818, and that it is strikingly like the ornamentation of some of the Windsor houses built by Asher Benjamin. It may

¹² Castleton Town Records, Book II, page 263.



Fig. 6 MALLORY-JONES HOUSE, DETAIL OF NORTH FRONT



Fig. 7 MALLORY-JONES HOUSE, WEST END AND NORTH FRONT

Fig. 8 MALLORY-JONES HOUSE, HALL AND STAIRS

Fig. 9 DR. CLARK HOUSE, ENTRANCE HALL

merely mean that both Dake and Benjamin had access to the same books which illustrated these well known motifs. It does not, however, answer the natural question "where did Dake get these scarce books"?

Unfortunately, we do not know what sort of stairway Dake designed for John Meacham in the hallway behind this entrance. A later owner of the Meacham-Ainsworth house made sweeping "improvements" during the black-walnut era, replacing the original stairs with a clumsy Victorian affair, changing partitions and replacing at least one of Dake's mantels with an uninspired white marble one.

The stairway in Dake's homestead is a gem, a fine example of the curved or spiral staircase (fig. 3). This type, unusual in a small and inexpensive house, is enriched by ornament to a degree that is rare even in costlier homes. The first thing seen as one enters it suggests a special gift to a deeply beloved bride. At any rate, he lavished hand work on it and as no similar ornament occurs in his other houses in Castleton, he probably did the carving himself. The newel is a graceful piece of lathe-turning, the slender hand-rail very comfortable to the hand. The stair-spindles or balusters, following the fashion of the period, are plain, rectangular in section, slim but sufficient for stiffness. So well was this lovely stairway built that after 140 years use, a good many of them with cruel neglect, it is solid and strong as when Sally first ascended it.

While the exposed ends of the steps are simple, with mouldings applied to form panels, the curved string was enriched by Dake with incised ornament as charming as it is unusual (fig. 4). Here long panels of reeded work (tiny half-cylinders instead of the more familiar grooves or flutes) are separated by little chevron-panels framed with reeds at right angles to those in the longer panels. With the changing lights and shadows from the entrance headlight, the angle of incidence of the light-rays constantly changing as the curving stairs sweep upward, he attained an effect of great richness with a minimum of work. The whole design is of faultless proportion and the detail seems to be quite unique, at least in Vermont. When Mr. Meacham visited the young man's home he must have appreciated the stairs quite as much as he seems to have liked the unusual entrance porch.

In these days of machine-tools we cannot but wonder at the patience needed to execute such a piece of work. The only machine-tool known to these old-timers was the lathe. All mouldings were worked out of the wooden strip with a moulding plane, its bottom and its cutting

knife shaped to the reverse of the moulding that was to be produced. Such planes were very precious tools and the section of the moulding cut by them is often a clue to the identity of the workman as of course the outfit of different moulding-planes was a personal possession. There were seldom two that were perfectly identical. Long hours of work went into these minor details of beautification of the home, work that was made pleasanter by the plenitude of first-growth white pine, "a most thankful wood" to quote an oldtime phrase. The cross-grained, often knotty, second-growth pine of today is not only harder to work, but strange to say, is much less resistant to decay even when properly seasoned.

Castleton has suffered from many destructive fires. Doubtless a good deal of Dake's work was lost to posterity in that way. We know that much has also been lost by later "improvements." Chronologically, Dake's next building now standing and recognized, is the house erected by Noahdiah Granger. According to tradition Granger was a fellow-employee of Dake's when both were working for Jonathan Deming and it is also tradition that Granger worked for or with Dake, which would explain Dake's connection with what is now called the Granger-Ransom house on South Street.

Noahdiah Granger, the son of Israel Granger, was born in Granby, Conn., July 17, 1778 according to an indenture among Miss Higley's papers, and from the Castleton Town Records it is learned that he married Rachel Moulton in Castleton December 25, 1799 and took the Freeman's Oath about the same time. Having been apprenticed to Luther Frisley, one of Castleton's carpenters and joiners, it follows naturally that he is listed (about 1810) as a master of that trade.⁸ Whatever his connection with Thomas Dake, it is apparent that they were good friends. Granger may have started building a home for his bride as soon as he finished his apprenticeship, but although he had the reputation of being a skilled cabinetmaker, he seems to have lacked the knowledge required to build a spiral staircase. This, by well-established family tradition as well as visual evidence, was from the designs of Thomas R. Dake (fig. 5). Perhaps Noahdiah helped Dake build his own home in 1809 and so became enamored of that style of stairs. It is well established by old diaries that for long years Noahdiah and his two sons worked on the cabinetwork of their home, completing the beautiful staircase and later, a number of very lovely mantels. Most of this fine cabinetwork was ruthlessly torn out by the Ransoms in an unhappy desire to modernize their home. No relics remain except the staircase, the finest in Castleton and one of the

best in Vermont. It differs considerably from that in the Dake homestead, especially in the coiled termination of the stair rail at the foot. The steps are most ingeniously curved in plan, no two alike, to give comfortable space for the feet, the *bête-noir* of all winding stairs. The ends of the steps bear thin jig-sawed brackets of excellent design and the arrangement of the second-floor newel with the odd swing of the floor on the second story show an interesting development from that in Dake's house.

About 1812 Dake was engaged by a new client, Rollin C. Mallory, destined to become one of Castleton's most distinguished citizens. He was born in Cheshire, Conn., May 27, 1784 and was brought by his parents to the neighboring village of Poultney, Vermont, some time in 1795. Mallory was born to parents of means and soon showed evidences of talent, graduating from Middlebury College in 1801. A brilliant, precocious youth, after reading law he moved to Castleton where he practised his profession although he was not admitted to the Bar until 1817. Possibly in those days there was less insistence on that. In 1809 he became a Member of Council under Governor Galusha and held that position for ten years. Vermont had a unicameral legislature in those days, and the Council roughly corresponded to the Senate of today. He was also a Trustee of the Castleton Grammar School for twelve years, beginning in 1807, and the local State's Attorney for four terms, starting in 1811. In 1820 he was elected a Representative to Congress from Vermont, married a Miss Stanley of Poultney and moved to that village where he died in April, 1835. His law-practise in Castleton extended from 1807 to 1818.¹⁰

It is exceedingly difficult to determine the date of erection of a house. Diaries, account-books and family letters if available, are definite records. The Land Records do not give the date that a house was built but an approximation may be had if an owner, who had received a parcel of land, sold it "with the dwelling thereon" to his successor. There is no such factual material in the case of the Mallory-Jones house. Conjecture must be based on family tradition and architectural style. From these sources we can guess that the earlier portion of the house was built about 1812, and that it was completed and enlarged perhaps a decade later, by the Jones family. The demarcation is visible on close inspection as the line of the westerly partition of the hall, originally the outside wall. The addition was a skilful one, but in place of the windows used on the north front and the east end, there is a long window, perhaps originally a doorway (fig. 7). The detail of this follows the design of the second-floor hall window on the north

front (fig. 6). The date is assigned by guesswork based on the architectural evidence of the ornament used in the frieze of the main cornice, and also the design of the window of the second floor hall. This paneling of the frieze, like the carvings in similar positions on the Meacham-Ainsworth and Harris houses, belong to a fashion that passed after 1815 or thereabouts. They are "the conventional thing," not characteristic of Dake in inventive moments, but very good.

If the front door was protected by a porch originally, it has long since disappeared. A stodgy affair dating from Victorian days became too rickety for repair and has recently been replaced by the present owner, Frederick Jones. With the aid of a clever local carpenter he has built the new porch shown in the picture, using as much of the old material as was sound in a new design. Thanks to their ingenuity and good taste the result is completely satisfying. It is so thoroughly in the spirit of Dake that if his ghost wanders the familiar streets of the village it must smile with pleasure when looking at it.

It is in the interior of the ground floor hall in the older portion of the house that we find Dake experimenting with a treatment that seemed to please him . . . and his clients . . . to a degree that it became a sort of trade-mark identifying a Dake house (fig. 8). A graceful arch is thrown across the back of the hall, the barrel vault behind it running to the rear wall. Beneath it is the doorway to the dining room flanked by two cuddies or cupboards, each with doors. A low paneled wainscot and a very simple stair rail with plain square newel and balusters complete the design, one that he varied in several successive houses with growing assurance and success. The effect is charming and unusual and one may forgive the naive and rather crude treatment of the return string of the stairs that cuts through the archivolt of the archway. It is one of the very few evidences in his work of lack of foresight and ingenuity. Perhaps Sally was about to present him with another of the numerous "Olive Branches"? This house has another of his experiments with arch and vault that it may be kinder to omit; the very flat arch and vault that with the inclosed passage-closets gives access from the northeast parlor to the dining room south of the lovely hall.

Dake was a very industrious worker. He had not only gained popularity and an assured position in the village which meant that plenty of work came to him without his seeking it, but there were frequent arrivals of new mouths to be fed. It is something of a mystery to us that he could find time to sit at his drafting board and design these lovely and original buildings, and also to do so large an amount



Fig. 10 HARRIS-WARD HOUSE, DETAIL OF EXTERIOR



Fig. 11 LANGDON-COLE HOUSE, EXTERIOR FROM SOUTHWEST

Fig. 12 LANGDON-COLE HOUSE, ENTRANCE HALL

(Copyright by Herbert Wheaton Congdon 1946)



Fig. 13 MARCUS LANGDON HOUSE, EXTERIOR FROM NORTHEAST (photo c. 1880)



*Fig. 14 LANGDON-COLE HOUSE, ENTRANCE BAY
(Copyright by Herbert Wheaton Congdon 1946)*

of work with his own hands on them. It is not too wild a guess to think that it would have been impossible without the sympathetic understanding and inspiration of his wife, Sally Deming. Probably he was one of those fortunate men who could do some operation that was repetitive but never became drudgery, while his active brain was designing, inventing things that would grow quickly on paper when he reached his home. Probably, too, he had a staff of competent and industrious workmen to whom he "could give a push and they'd run for a week." His work shows that he was capable of self-criticism and doubtless his customers had ideas about what he had done and what they wanted him to do.

The unknown client for whom he built Dr. Clark's house on the north side of Main Street was apparently persuaded that Dake had a good idea for entrance halls and the stair problem. It is an exceedingly plain little house, made plainer by the ravages of "improvements" such as removal of fireplaces and mantelpieces, but the hallway could not be altered (fig. 9). Here are *three* arches. The middle one marks the vault, and it is a curious one, changing in shape from its start at the hall partition to its terminus at the dining room wall, with an effect of perspective, perhaps accidental, that makes the dining room wall look farther back than it really is. The stairs go up between the partitions at the left, and at the right a blind arch marks the big dining room closet. It is thought that this house was built in or about 1818. Its present owner is the village's beloved physician who, a score of years beyond the Scriptural threescore-and-ten is still active in his work of healing, still active in the study of medicine's newest progress, a worthy owner for a house that is as sound today as when it was built.

About this same time, it is thought, Mr. Harris built the house now owned by Lawrence Ward who has done and is doing much intelligent work to bring it back to its former beauty. It stands on the north side of Main Street at the easterly entrance of the village, a handsome and conventional dwelling in type and plan. It has suffered severely from "improvements" which consisted of tearing out all of the interior of any significance, including the stairs, fireplaces and mantels. On the exterior its appearance was changed . . . for the worse . . . by replacing the old small-paned sash with commonplace modern ones. An ugly piazza in the mis-named "Queen Anne" style concealed the lovely doorway. Lawrence Ward, with small means, has done wonders merely by removing this piazza and giving the whole building a coat of honest white paint. As old materials turn up in the barn and thereabouts it is hoped to make further restorations.

There is no definite record of the date of its erection or of the architect-builder. There are, however, land-records and architectural evidence that may warrant the belief that the design was Thomas R. Dake's and that it was built soon after 1818. In that year John Meacham sold the land to Harris according to the Castleton Land Records, and it may be presumed that Harris built his house forthwith. A large dwelling, it has a fine entrance of conventional design and above it one of Castleton's few Palladian windows. The west gable is the only one remaining in Castleton to bear the elaborate ornament seen in houses of the period, especially in eastern Vermont. The ornament of the frieze of the main cornice and of that of the window-heads is a possible clue to Dake as the designer (fig. 10). The resemblance to similar features of the Meacham-Ainsworth house is apparent; they are almost identical. The argument runs thus:—

Meacham sold the land to Harris.

Harris was obviously familiar with Meacham's house.

The Harris house has details of ornament almost identical with those on the Meacham house.

There was no architect-builder in Castleton capable of such good design as the Harris house.

Meacham was satisfied with his young architect and glad to help him get ahead, so, we may guess,

Meacham recommended Dake to Harris on that basis.

Harris therefore employed Dake as his architect-builder. All of which is circumstantial evidence, with all the dangers that belong to it. There is no proof that Dake designed this house, but a very strong probability!

And yet . . . architectural evidence is also present that Dake did *not* design the Harris house. The entrance bay is quite unlike any other work of his; also unlike anything else in the village. If more were known about Mr. Harris, where he came from, what his connections were in his former home, we might know whether this points to another evidence of Dake's versatility or to the design of an out-of-town house-joiner of considerable ability. The details of ornament in cornice and over windows mentioned above are book-stuff, not original. The two Poultneys are not far from Castleton. In East Poultney Elijah Scott, another unknown but brilliant house-joiner, designed the Baptist meeting-house built in 1805 and the excellent Howe-Dewey house behind it which was finished in 1813. After studying these buildings it is obvious that Scott had both books and

education; but his work seems much too suave to fit the Harris entrance and the Palladian window above it. There seems to be a greater possibility that Dake was the architect Mr. Harris employed than not; without interior details architectural evidence is weak and without old diaries or letters proof is impossible.

Still, there is a lingering curiosity about Thomas Dake and the manner in which he made a living between the completion of the Mallory-Jones house and the next one remaining that we know to be his, the much-photographed Langdon-Cole house (fig. 11) completed, according to B. F. Langdon's diary¹³ in 1823; a period of considerably over five years. Probably Dake was building useful but unimportant buildings, barns, farmhouses and the like. Some of his work may be in Castleton today, obscured by later alterations and "improvements." Probably others have been destroyed in Castleton's plagues of fire. One, at least, that was burned within the memory of some of the older citizens, has a shadowy eminence, a half-developed legend, by being described as a duplicate or "twin" of the famous and amazingly original Langdon-Cole house. It was generally known as the Marcus Langdon house and stood on the site of the present Post Office. Thanks to Miss Alleyne Clark, now of Boston, it is possible to include a photograph of it (fig. 13) which makes an interesting comparison with the Langdon-Cole house (fig. 11). Architectural evidence dates it about 1815.

Note first, the great difference in mass. Marcus' house was covered by a low-pitched hipped roof while B.F.'s house was gabled, although in both the curious projecting bays had hipped roofs running back into the main roof. George W. deForest, the present owner of the Langdon-Cole (B.F.'s) house reports these to be annoying sources of leaks in freezing-and-thawing weather; the first valid criticism of Dake's construction on record.

Note second, a difference in detail that also makes a notable difference in appearance, that in Marcus' house the main entablature runs all the way across the front, breaking out around the bays and carrying, unbroken, across the recess of the entrance porch. In B.F.'s house it bends in, following the "ox-bow" shape of the walls, with isolated blocks of entablature topping the columns.

¹³ Letter to author from Mrs. Carlos Cole dated June 26, 1948. Mrs. Cole is the last of B. F. Langdon's descendants to own and live in the house. The diary referred to is in her possession and in this letter she states that it will ultimately go to Mrs. Hulda Cole of Castleton, local librarian and the custodian of some of Miss Mary Gerrish Higley's papers that are referred to in the text.

Note third, while in Marcus' house the roof is carried across the recess between the bays on square posts, in B.F.'s these supports are tall, slim columns, strong but very graceful. These three main differences make the difference between Marcus' rather stolid dwelling and B.F.'s brilliant, gay residence. It might be described as the difference between a sturdy peasant and a gay cavalier? (fig. 14).

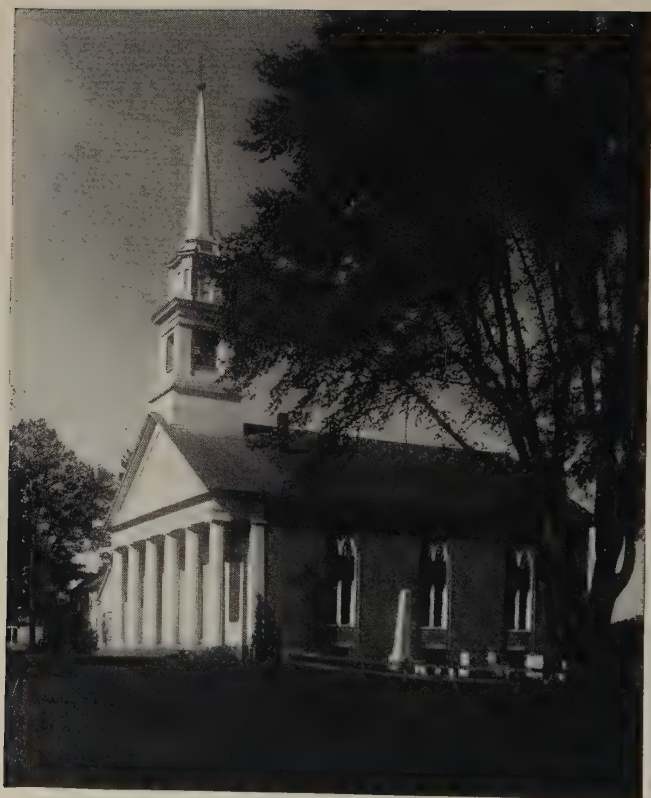
It seems probable that a similar difference existed in the interiors of the two dwellings. While Marcus' house was destroyed within the memory of persons still living, they were young enough at that time to lack detailed memories of the plan and arrangement of the interior, details that are of considerable importance. The best that can be done is to make a composite mental picture, a process beset with difficulties in reconciliation of apparent contradictions.

Miss Clark, in offering to help with the problem, writes "I am one of the oldest living inhabitants of the town—ex-inhabitant—and remember much about it prior to the numerous fires which have so devastated it." (Calendar-age may differ greatly from mental age!). From her large collection of pictures of oldtime Castleton, many have been loaned for use in the research and have been of great value. Miss Clark visited in the house as a little girl. She has also taken the trouble to make a trip to see a lady recently who had *lived* in it as a child. This lady, Mrs. Beane of Worcester, has a clear mental picture of the interior arrangements, especially of the entrance hall, which must have differed considerably from that of the Langdon-Cole house. In that, the wide front hall entered from the street, is, roughly speaking, a square in plan. Doors from right and left lead to dining room and parlor but the stairs go up *between partitions* (fig. 12), the stairs framed by a narrow arch and the part of the hall leading to the rear by a wider arch, with barrel-vault behind it: the "Dake trademark" in a third variant. Mrs. Beane lived in the Marcus Langdon house from about 1884 until 1892 when her father "built the house just below the Episcopal Church because he said it would be cheaper to build than to continue to heat the Langdon house. Here is the interior. A large hall (entered directly from the front door) with the stairs on the right, which were curving and not inclosed. Mrs. Beane remembers sliding down the banisters and says you could look down into the main hall from the second floor. . . ." ¹⁵ From the plan drawn out by Miss Clark with Mrs. Beane's cooperation, it appears that on each side of the entrance hall were rooms, both of which had their

¹⁴ Letter from Miss Alleyne Clark to author, dated September 28, 1948.



Fig. 15 LANGDON-COLE HOUSE, DINING ROOM MANTEL
 Fig. 16 LANGDON-COLE HOUSE, DRAWING ROOM MANTEL
 Fig. 17 LANGDON-COLE HOUSE, STUDY MANTEL



*Fig. 18 FEDERATED CHURCH, EXTERIOR
(Copyright by Herbert Wheaton Congdon 1946)*

street fronts bowed out as in the Langdon-Cole house. Back of the parlor on the right as the dining room and this part of the house was extended into the garden as an ell; the kitchen was in this, adjoining the dining-room, which was reached by a narrow hall back of the stairs, as well as through a door from the right-hand parlor. At the back of the main hall was a room used as his office by Mrs. Beane's father, a physician. Perhaps this was his waiting-room as it opened into a room on the left. On the left of the front part of the hall was a large parlor, but this apparently had no connection with the room behind it. This is also true of the similar room in the Langdon-Cole house.

"The stairs widened out very much at the bottom but (Mrs. Beane) does not remember the detail of stair-rail or newels. There were two large marble fireplaces in the two front parlors."¹⁴ It would appear that Dake's mantels had been replaced by "improvements" in the '70s or '80s.

Some other old Castletonians who have been consulted have distinct memories of an arch or arches in the hall. A single arch as in the Mallory-Jones house would have been perfectly possible according to the plan as described by Mrs. Beane. When this was brought to her attention, and photographs of the other Langdon house and the Mallory-Jones house halls were shown her she said "there were no arches, I am sure. People must have confused the Marcus Langdon house with Mr. Cole's, where everyone went to pay their taxes, or Dr. Clark's, where many went to him as their doctor." There seem to be about as many who do not think there were any arches as those who think they remember them.

So, let us turn to the Langdon-Cole house; the arches are unimportant. Dake built this for B. F. Langdon, a son of the prosperous and distinguished Chauncy Langdon, and as already stated, it was completed in 1823. "B.F." as he was generally called, was happily born to wealth and popularity as indicated by his diary. Dake seems to have had an opportunity to let himself go, and if we may judge B.F. by his diary, he designed a home that expressed the personality of its owner. Freeing himself more than usual from hampering tradition, profiting by his past mistakes, he devised a plan as convenient as it is unconventional in its details. No other house in Vermont, save the destroyed Marcus Langdon house, has this scheme of two-story, room-width bay windows flanking the wide hall. It is an unique plan.

¹⁵ Letter from Burton S. Dake to author, dated June 25, 1948.

While the effect is rather clumsy in the Marcus Langdon house, in B.F.'s clever changes in mass and detail justify Dake's bold experiment.

As one enters the generous, inviting doorway the wide, deep hall is seen to be a reception room, not a mere passage. It is brilliantly lighted by the spreading fanlight and the windows that flank the door (fig. 12). It expresses hospitality. From its left or west side one enters a drawing room in which guests might gather until they entered the dining room on its east side. The north side of the hall is occupied by one of Dake's most successful arrangement of arches that have been called "his trademark." These set off the family quarters. The wider, westerly, arch frames a vaulted passageway leading to a garden-entrance. From this passage there is a door to the room behind the drawing room: a study or office. Opposite it is a narrow hall leading to the kitchen ell.

The narrower, easterly, arch masks the stairway to the sleeping rooms of the second story, which runs up between partitions, with a wide hall above the passageway of the ground floor. From this one enters a guest room to the south and the ell to the north. Directly above the arches of the first floor there is a partition with a door opening into a family sitting-room or boudoir, well lighted by the large Palladian window. Bedrooms flank this, over the dining and drawing rooms of the ground floor. Dake's genius combined a gracious and obvious welcome for guests with a gesture of privacy for the family quarters much better in this house than in Dr. Clark's. It is so livable, so well fitted to modern ideas, that surprisingly few changes have been made to fit it to Twentieth Century requirements.

The rooms on the ground floor are noteworthy in their details. The dining room has an ample closet for china and other table needs, and a hallway giving access to the kitchen quarters and pantry. Between these is a fireplace with mantel (fig. 15) that shows Dake in one of his most playful moments. Here he has combined pieces of large, swelling mouldings used in short sections, instead of paneling, with oddly modern flat strips that frame them, surmounted by a flat, unmoulded mantel shelf, without even a bed-moulding. The play of light and shade, whether it be from the strong south light of the big bay window or from the gentle candlelight of the table at night, is delightful. The rich, large-scale mouldings with their curved surfaces contrast with the flat, emphatic strips, vertical lights and shadows set against horizontal. While odd, it is an undoubted masterpiece.

The drawing room or parlor is, like the dining room, lighted only

from the great bay-window. On the wall opposite this is a charming mantel (fig. 16), much more conventional in design than its mate in the dining room. Behind it, in the study that was once Town Treasurer Cole's office, is another of Dake's unusual mantels (fig. 17), forthright and functional. A pleasant legend of the house is that when Winston Churchill (he of Virginia, not the British one) was a guest of the Cole's, he was so charmed with its design that he had it faithfully copied and used it in his southern home. The flanking closets, useful features for an office or study, take up the space not occupied by the massive chimney; a tribute to Dake's consideration of practical conveniences in a period when ample closet-space was uncommon.

For the exterior, the illustrations speak for themselves. The street front is sheathed with wide flat boards to give a smooth, stucco-like surface (fig. 12). Elsewhere the walls are clapboarded in the usual manner. It is a pleasing as well as a very striking building. It is rightfully considered Dake's masterpiece, and was very nearly his last work as far as is definitely known. Apparently he rested on his laurels; yet he had a family to care for! The size of a family has a good deal to do with the will-to-work of its head. Thomas R. Dake's children are listed as follows:—

- (1) Eliza Reynolds Dake, born at Castleton August 12, 1810, married Merlin Clark of Castleton Sept. 19, 1833, joined the church March 5, 1837, died—April, 1838.
- (2) Adoline (sic; sometimes spelled Adaline in records) Dake, born July 20, 1812, died September 20, 1812.
- (3) Delinda Caroline Dake, born December 13, 1813, frightened to death by a savage dog November 7, 1831.
- (4) Thomas Ceylon Dake, born May 12, 1816, married Emeline Vaughan of New Jersey about 1841, died in 1875. His wife died November, 1915. They moved to Ohio about 1860. They had four children:
 - (a) Ella, born April 12, 1845, married James J. Goodale of Cleveland, Ohio. She had no children. Mr. Goodale had two sons by a previous marriage, Julian, now dead and Herman, now living in Chicago. The Dake records they are supposed to have inherited from Ella are now lost.
 - (b) Francis, born in the late 1840's, married her cousin Charlton Davis. Both are now dead.
 - (c) Emma, born June 6, 1853, died November 9, 1947. Unmarried.

(d) George Lyman, born January 15, 1858, married Emma Louise Sargeant of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, September 22, 1890. He is now dead. His wife is now living in Altadena, Calif. They had two sons, Burton Sargeant, born June 29, 1892 and now living in Altadena and Edward Vaughan, born August 23, 1893, now living in Chicago, Illinois. Burton has a sideboard made by Thomas R. Dake and Edward, a table inlaid with an eagle.

- (5) Wait Deming Dake, born June 6, 1819. No further record.
- (6) Sarah Jane Dake, born March 28, 1821, joined church May 15, 1836. No further record.
- (7) Frederick Dake, born May 1, 1823. No further records.
- (8) Mary D. Dake, no birth-record. Baptized January 7, 1826.¹⁶ No death-record. If she was baptized in infancy her birth would have been during 1825. She witnessed a deed transferring land by her father May 28, 1850.¹⁸
- (9) George Henry Dake, born June 14, 1833, died September 28, 1834.¹¹

There is a Dake family tradition that Thomas and Sally had ten children. There is no record of a tenth child in any of the usual sources, and no "family Bible" has been found.

These dates are authenticated by a collation of Town, State and Church records and in several cases by the dates on the cemetery monuments.

If it is difficult to understand how Dake supported his growing family between houses between 1812 (Mallory-Jones house) and the "B.F." or Langdon-Cole house completed in 1823, it is still more puzzling that he seems to have done no more building until he got the "new meeting-house" job in 1832. We can merely guess. There is this near decade during which, apparently, there was a pause in house-building in Castleton.

Nevertheless, during that time the village was having a business boom. All Vermont was stirring. Agriculture shifted its emphases

¹⁶ Book I, Records of the Congregational Church of Christ in Castleton. These records begin July 18, 1804, but older ones have been copied into it. This book, together with some of Miss Mary Gerrish Higley's papers, referred to in the text, are in the custody of the Clerk of the local Congregational Society in Castleton, Robert W. Rice (1948).

¹⁸ Castleton Land Records, Book XII, page 232.



Fig. 19 FEDERATED CHURCH, PULPIT
 Fig. 20 FEDERATED CHURCH, DETAIL OF PULPIT
 (Copyright by Herbert Wheaton Congdon 1946)



Fig. 21 RANSOM HOUSE (MANSE) EXTERIOR

from grain to wool to cattle, and back again. New industries were starting. Arunah Hyde and others were "putting Castleton on the map" with the idea of making it Vermont's center of transportation. Stage lines and horse-drawn freight centered here, with the Lake ports to the west and expanding Rutland to the east. Dake was thrifty, he understood land-trading, and like most Vermonters could turn his hand to anything. He got along, even if he was a quiet, modest man. Perhaps Sally has been the business-getter in their marital partnership. In addition, at this period she was hampered by a lively brood of youngsters added to grief of deaths among the Demings as well as some of her own children.

In due time the people of the Congregational parish became discontented with their meeting-house, so much more austere in appearance than their own homes. They decided to build a new one and awarded the work to Dake, a member of the congregation and a contributor. He and his wife had joined the church February 2, 1817.¹⁶ He seems to have accepted the contract with quiet enthusiasm and began work immediately. One of the Higleys wrote to a relative in Ohio February 21, 1832 "Today Mr. Dake has gone into the woods after timber for the new Meeting House."¹⁷ Thomas R. Dake, house-joiner, was back in harness again.

It was not a pleasant job like those for kindly, appreciative clients for whom he had built homes. He had a Committee to deal with, probably a highly vocal one. Like the one that had plagued . . . and defrauded . . . Sally's father, Jonathan Deming, when the first meeting house was being built, they were hard taskmasters.¹⁶ People can be wealthy and parsimonious. They were both, and they were apparently completely lacking in understanding of Dake's ideals. He seems to have been trying to build a house of worship, not a mere audience-room.

Feeling his way in an unfamiliar idiom, Dake designed his new Meeting House (now the Federated Church) along customary lines. The Greek Revival was just coming into fashion. He essayed to follow it, planning a colonnade of six Greek Doric columns as the chief feature of the facade. Above this is an unfortunately huge pediment, its vast expanse unbroken by the windows usually found in this location in a dwelling. The fine steeple that rises above it does much, however, to draw the eye upwards and perhaps he meant this to be the focus of the building. With more money to spend he might

¹⁷ A letter written by Zilpah Higley dated September 12, 1833. In Miss Mary Gerrish Higley's papers; see 13 and 16 above.

have made a much more splendid affair of it. With limited funds and a constant urging to economize, he did the best that could be done for the price (fig. 18).

In the portico behind the columns is the very large single entrance, with immense sliding doors. This opens to a roomy vestibule, the stairs to the galleries and the doors to the auditorium at the ends. Just why he turned the interior around, as it were, placing the pulpit between these entrances from the vestibule, is hard to understand. A much older meeting house in East Burke, too far off, it would seem, to have been his inspiration has this unusual arrangement. It has the serious defect that any latecomer has to enter in the face of the congregation of satisfied folk who arrived on time, and under the disapproving eye of the minister! Artistically, it has the objection that on entering nothing meets the eye but an array of empty pews or a sea of faces, according to circumstances.

The interior is severely plain, almost austere, and at first appearance, quite lacking in charm. Dake's novel device of a floor sloping down from the rear end to the pulpit does not add to it. Today a gaudily painted organ replaces the rear gallery of Dake's day; there are no windows in the rear wall to give a kindly sparkle of daylight, no suggestion that it is a religious building. It is not until one has reached his seat, turned around and looked towards the pulpit, that there is a hint of Dake's scheme. There is his splendid pulpit, set out from a shallow apse with curved wall and elliptical half-dome, that at once catches the eye. It is rather breathtaking. Things begin to fall into place. Three barren walls, two of them broken by the pointed-arch, small-paned windows, a completely impersonal ceiling as lacking in character as the gray sky of a breathless August day, and . . . and . . . this perfect pulpit! Here God's Word is read to His listening people, here the beloved pastor, blackclad, expounds It and, moved by the Spirit, exhorts his flock. Surely, it was worth the effort to "get to church on time." As surely, the red-faced late-comer feels peace.

Whatever the architectural shortcomings of Dake's only church building, he is forgiven. This masterpiece makes up for all the petty economies forced on him by a hard-headed, uncomprehending Committee and a congregation untrained in giving. There is a local legend, so true to the spirit of the people of that time (and earlier) and to Dake himself, that it must be true.

Dake, the story goes, was allowed \$250 for designing and making the pulpit. The cost, of course, was running far beyond that paltry

sum. The Committee ordered him to "change the design, make it plain and cheaper." He pleaded, he stormed. They were obdurate. Finally he said "Well, I'll make it my way and you won't have to pay more than your \$250." And so it was settled.

This pulpit (fig. 19) is better shown than described. It is a big affair, high and wide, gleaming white, made of the best of well-seasoned, clear, first-growth native white pine. It is not hard to imagine Dake on that snowy February day seeking out the tremendous old pine that would furnish material for it, together with fine straight-grained wild cherry for the stairs that curve up to it so gracefully at either end. The central element is a great smooth semi-cylinder, flanked by a most bewildering array of vertical mouldings of sweeping, curved cross-section. These catch the light from the windows so gentle shadows mingle with sparkling high-lights, and frame elaborate paneling of beautiful proportions. Here is Dake at his best, his most original, his most ingenious. As far as known it has neither prototype nor copy. Always a thrifty man, he was averse to wasting the space in its hollow base and contrived a little cuddy or closet therein, its door half hidden, where the communion vessels and sacred books might be stored (fig. 20).

As the building was nearing completion squabbles with the Committee multiplied. He had worries at home, too, for Sally was "expecting," and things were not going well with her. Dake worked on the pulpit in his shop in the ell of his homestead, near her, carving away at the "thankful" pine, enjoying the growing beauty of this dream of his, yet troubled by many things. The baby, little George Henry, was born June 14th, 1833, a sickly child. There were disputes about money due from the Committee. Sally, always his comforter, grew weaker day by day. She died July 15, 1833 while the last finishing touches were being put on the now completed meeting house.

Sunday, July 28, 1833, it was dedicated with a big service with appropriate sermonizing, the preacher being the Rev. Dr. Tucker of Troy, New York. His sermon is still preserved. It did not mention that the church authorities had made an offer to settle with Dake for a substantially smaller sum than was due him. Dake was beaten. He accepted the compromise, a substantial discount from his bill¹⁶ as Sally's father, Jonathan Deming, had been forced to do many years earlier when the first edifice was completed.¹⁶ Crushed by grief, burdened by a family of five or more children, one of them a sickly four-weeks-old baby and the oldest (and only useful girl) on the verge of marriage, he must have been desperate with worry. Sally's mother

was dead and apparently his own mother was also. The records do not include any sister to whom he could turn. Probably daughter Eliza took hold in the emergency and of course the neighbors helped, as they always do in Vermont. Such aid could only be temporary. Eliza was married in September.

The Vermont Vital Records give under Windsor, the marriage of Thomas R. Dake of Castleton to Sarah Donaghue, December 16, 1833. In the Castleton Town Records her name is spelled Donoghan and the further information is given that the marriage was performed by Joseph Tracy of Windsor, minister. The Windsor Town records give Sarah Donaghue (sic) as the daughter of Mary and James Donaghue, her birth February 8, 1793 which would make her nearly 41 at the time of the wedding, a good sensible spinster. She seems to have accepted the somewhat anomalous position with good grace and to have been a faithful and loving wife. Whether she was a childhood friend of Dake's or a "candidate" suggested by some of his relatives in Windsor we shall never know. The couple returned to Castleton and we find "the second Sally" joining the church "by profession of faith" May 8, 1836¹⁶ and from that time on she very nearly disappears from the picture, her name seldom appearing in letters or records. She made herself beloved by the children and cared faithfully for the sickly baby until his death the following September; a truly good woman.

It is not known whether Dake ceased all work as a house-joiner after Sally's death. His name is on the church books as a contributor, and for payments made for small routine repairs. A few years after the church was dedicated the top of the steeple blew off in a terrific gale and after considerable criticism of his workmanship he was employed to replace it—for a very small amount of money. During these years his name appears in the tax and land books of the Town frequently. He had bought a small farm outside the village, and of course this took up much of his time. He sold his South Street homestead shortly after Sally's death. In the Grand List for 1830 two houses were set against his name in addition to other real and personal property but in 1834 he had but one house. In this List he received an exemption for son, equipped, in the militia, undoubtedly young Thomas Ceylon who was 18 that year. The Land Books show that he was fairly active in buying and selling land, a profitable form of speculation in those years.

There is reasonable doubt whether he ever built another fine house. The present Congregational manse, the Ransom house, is attributed



Fig. 22 RANSOM HOUSE (MANSE), STAIRWAY



Fig. 23 SIDEBOARD MADE BY DAKE, DATE UNKNOWN

to him by many persons (fig. 21). A Greek Revival house of considerable size with much excellent detail obviously derived from books, it is a smaller edition of the house in Orwell (designed and built by James M. Lamb of Shoreham for Linus Willcox) but it is nothing like as good in mass and proportions. If Dake designed it, he was obviously failing. With the Willcox house as an example, it repeats the unpardonable architectural sin of placing *five* Ionic columns in the front portico instead of the even number required by custom. Such an error in taste would have stirred Dake to anger in his better days.

Two local traditions relate to this building, one absurd and improbable, the other comic. The first is that the plans were smuggled out of England with some machinery in 1816 and in some way came into the hands of Mr. Ransom, who used them after their long concealment. The other connects with the Rice house across the street. Timothy Rice, for whom it was built by an unknown man, was a quiet, unassuming gentleman. Ransom, rich, domineering and lacking in niceties of manner, seems to have been annoyed by Timothy's temerity in building on the main street, and greeted him roughly one morning. "Wait until you see my house, Rice; it'll make yours look like" . . . a certain useful but unmentionable substitute for plumbing!

The Ransom house was built about 1846 if we may judge from the Land Books that record the transfer of the lot from the Langdons to Mrs. Ransom. The Willcox house, finished in 1843, is a noble residence set well above the highway and back from it, and may have aroused Ransom's interest. It is entirely possible that by roaring at the aging but still famous Dake he may have persuaded him to design "the finest house in Castleton" which he declared it would be.

The main stairway is a very fine one, second in beauty only to that in the other Ransom house, the one built by Noahdiah Granger on South Street. Where it stops at the second floor it is much simpler and has no newel (fig. 22). Its termination on the ground floor is very like that of the Granger-Ransom stairs. It is decidedly less beautiful than the Willcox stairs in Orwell. It may be said with near-certainty that no Castleton housejoiner except Dake could have laid out and built the Manse staircase. It is also true that there are no records of any out-of-town architect having been called in, and the family of James Lamb have records sufficiently complete so they have stated with confidence that Lamb did not design the building.

One little detail, one only, points to Dake: the unusual trim of the doors in the entrance hall. These casings are not in any known manner

of his, but they are so different from the usual thing that he may have designed them. They are perfectly plain, but at intervals an odd little four-pointed star is carved into the flat surface. It has a "modernistic" look that he showed in the Langdon-Cole mantels. So we leave this building, its designer still unknown. If it was Dake, this was his last work.

At some time in his life Dake amused himself making furniture for his home. Two pieces only are known now, a table with an inlaid eagle owned by Edward Vaughan Dake of Chicago and a sideboard in the home of his brother, Burton Sargeant Dake of Altadena, California. These gentlemen are great-grandsons of Thomas R. Dake the house-joiner. They cherish these heirlooms. They plan to pass them down through their elder sons to later generations.¹⁵

The sideboard (fig. 23) is a fine piece of cabinetwork. Most of it is made of rosewood, the pilasters, colonnets and horizontal strips of curly maple, which shows light-colored in the cut. As a matter of design it is a little disappointing, although the workmanship is masterly. There are no plinths under the bases of the colonnets whose caps, it must be confessed, are clumsy. The curved openings at the bottom are more odd than pleasing. The use of the square edged boards for top and the maple strips, however, are distinctly reminiscent of the Langdon-Cole mantels where they are used boldly, intelligently, by a man who was sure of himself. In the case of the sideboard, alas, it seems merely to show lack of invention.

One may hazard the guess that Dake made this in those sterile years after Sally Deming died, Sally who had fanned the flame of his genius. If Thomas Dake really was the architect of the Ransom house, that house is confirmatory evidence that his light had dimmed with her death. The one flicker that shows in it, the unique door trim on the ground floor mentioned earlier, may be a pathetic reaching towards his old boldness, his freedom from the restraint of convention. If it is his last major work, it is a pitiful testimony to a dying genius. If some other architect designed and built it, he was no genius.

Thomas R. Dake died in Castleton March 2, 1852. Oddly enough in a town so proud of this son, the local records do not give this date and a legend has grown up that he died in "Ohio" and his grave was unknown. When some searchers found his headstone in the burying ground adjoining the meeting house that he built, another minor mystery was uncovered. Dake's first wife and several of their children are buried in the Deming lot close by the church. But at the extreme of the opposite side there is a small three-grave plot surrounded by a

high old fashioned cast iron fence, containing two headstones. That on the west side is inscribed

THOMAS R. DAKE

died

March 2 1852

aged 66 years.

Next to this is a larger headstone, occupying the middle of the north side of the plot and bearing the inscription

SARAH D.

WIFE OF ASA WILKINS

Dec. 29, 1862

Ae.68

Next to it, on the east side of the little plot, careful examination of the uncared-for ground suggests a burial, but there is no monument. Of course the question arose "Who was Mrs. Wilkins and why is Thomas Dake buried next to her instead of with his wife and children in the Deming lot?" This was soon answered by the Vermont Vital Statistics which state that Mrs. Thomas R. Dake of Castleton and A. Wilkins of Poultney were united in marriage (second for both) by the Rev. Willard Childs. It may be guessed that when Thomas Dake died, his second wife bought the small burial plot and erected the stone. The placing may have been suggested by her idea that the third grave-space would be used for his daughter Mary who, at the time of her father's death, might have been considered "an old maid." The middle gravespace of course would have been intended by Widow Dake for her own interment.

Just what became of Mary cannot be learned from the records. The sole proofs of her existence are (a) in the Church's entry noting that "Mary D. Dake was baptized January 27, 1826," the daughter of Thomas and Sally Deming Dake. It is guesswork that her middle name was Deming; (b) she signed, as witness, a deed of her father's conveying land and dated May 28, 1850.¹⁸ Her age at that time may have been about twenty-four years or more. If she were living when her father died, it might explain provision for the third interment.

The records as far as searched are vague as to when Widow Dake remarried.⁷ They merely state "Mrs. Thomas Dake of Castleton to A. Wilkins of Poultney. Second for both, by Willard Childe, minister." It was learned, however, that Asa Wilkins was born in Amherst, New York, the son of Robert S. Wilkins and Matilda

Abbott, and died of catarrh in Castleton October 8, 1871. It is not known when or where he married his first wife, or if he had any children by her. At his death he was "82 years, 8 months and 3 days" of age.⁷ Having survived his wife for nine years, if he was buried by friends, it was probably in the third grave of her little lot. It seems that there were none to erect a monument there, and there is always the chance that having been a jeweler in Poultney before he moved to his second wife's home in Castleton, that there were friends or relatives in that village who saw to his burial elsewhere.

So ends the history of Thomas R. Dake, house-joiner. A man of undoubted genius in a curiously small field, he nevertheless left an enduring mark on Castleton, his chosen home. That none of his children followed in his footsteps, none evidenced the slightest artistic ability, is no more peculiar than the bright Little Candle that was Dake, the son of a simple farmer. Whatever rebuffs he received during his life, his work is deeply appreciated in the village that he made over.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing this study of Dake of Castleton has been a delightful experience, due to the many pleasant friends it has brought to me. To be sure, I have made use of them unmercifully. The work could not have been accomplished without their cooperation, and indeed, their inspiration. Their interest in the many puzzles and bafflements encouraged me. Each new clue was an exciting item, shared among us. My name on the title page merely means that I wove their threads, grave or gay, into the tapestry, my typewriter the loom . . . but they furnished web and woof!

First in point of time at least, my thanks to Israel Smith of Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania. As a Middlebury College student he visited Castleton, fell in love with Dake's work and resolved to write a biography of that genius. He asked me for information. I had none. Seven years later I wrote him again to ask about progress. The result was that shortly after I had Mr. Smith's scanty material, and his blessing if I would write about a man of whom he had been unable to get any information. In my ignorance I started work. I would never have begun this work but for Israel Smith.

Now the others. I fall back on the alphabet, for in a few cases a brief letter opened wide vistas while in many others I shamelessly accepted hours, days, weeks of work so that we might bring Dake before a public, no matter how small. Mrs. Mary N. Baldwin did a large amount of essential research in Windsor, both in Town records and in the old files of the ancient newspaper. Mrs. Catherine Cates Coblentz not only gave me the use of much material she has gathered for a book about Castleton but let me read it in manuscript, which was a great help in gaining the atmosphere of Dake's day. Miss Alleyne Clark, self-styled "one of the oldest living ex-inhabitants of Castleton" not only put me in touch with other persons who proved to be mines of information, but gave me vital clues to puzzling matters. She also gave me great help by lending me old photographs. On top of all that, she made a trip to Worcester to interview Mrs. Beane who once lived in the Marcus Langdon house, destroyed many years ago. Mrs. Carlos Cole, the last of B. F. Langdon's family to live in the Langdon-Cole house gave me invaluable help about its history. Mrs. Hulda Cole, custodian of much of Mary Gerrish Higley's valuable historical material, was generous with loans of scrap-books etc. and with advice. Burton S. Dake and his mother who is the last living grandchild of Thomas, I believe, gave much genealogical material as well as the picture of Dake's sideboard. Mr. and Mrs. George W. de Forest, the

present owners of the Langdon-Cole house furnished data from their title-search and were most generous in letting me photograph the building inside and out. George Adams Ellis, who lived in the Marcus Langdon house as a boy, was helpful with reminiscences. Mrs. Frederick Jones, of the second family to own the Mallory-Jones house, gave helpful data and permission to photograph it within and without. Miss Ellen Langdon gave very valuable genealogical data on that family which was so intertwined with Dake's life and help from her rich storehouse of memories.

Mrs. Margaret Onion's help was great. A busy housewife with small children, and living well out from the village, she put in long hours searching Town records with the help of the Town Clerk, demolishing legends, building a structure of fact. She also secured for me the privilege of lecturing before large and interested audiences from which I gained new leads. Probably a good half of the information that I received came through her efforts. It was her introduction to Mrs. Baldwin that enabled me to secure vital genealogical material. William Rice took time off from a busy high-school program to do a large amount of "leg-work" and especially to search the Church records and the Higley material that are in his father's custody. Much important material was secured by him.

Then there were the helpers who had no connection with Castleton, no knowledge of Dake, but who gave me generous aid. Edward Caswell Perry, librarian in Greenfield, Massachusetts when we began our correspondence, helped with the Asher Benjamin clues. The Rhode Island Historical Society through Clifford Monahan did genealogical research that was impossible for me to do but was of fundamental importance. The Western Reserve Historical Society of Cleveland, Ohio, through the efforts of Mrs. Alene Lowe White their Librarian, went so far in their efforts to run down the Dake descendant, Goodale, who was supposed to have Dake's sketchbook, that she and her staff telephoned every Goodale in the Cleveland directory! Such generous cooperation is heart-warming. Our own Vermont Historical Society perhaps might have been expected to give much help as it was its Director, Earle W. Newton, who had encouraged me to continue what seemed for a time an impossible task. But his assistant, Clara E. Follette, went far beyond my most hopeful expectations in sending me copies of records in the Vermont Vital Statistics and material from books not available to me.

There are many Castleton people that I have not mentioned who were encouraging and helpful and who cheered me with delightful hospitality on many occasions. It was pleasant to have them interested in my project; but it was rewarding to make so many new friends.

VOLUME X

THE HILL COUNTRY OF NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND

by HAROLD FISHER WILSON

By the opening of the twentieth century, the implications of economic trends had become so completely regional in their scope, that it became impossible to survey the agricultural growth of Vermont except in relationship to the whole of northern New England. Mr. Wilson, a Vermonter, is primarily concerned with this state and the background and present state of its agriculture. Primarily devoted to the years since 1870, the author has constructed a thoughtful historical background in the period 1790-1870. Of this profusely illustrated study the New England Quarterly observes: "It is written with insight and affection."

8 vo., 455 pp., maps and illustr., \$4.50
(Available only in set orders.)

The following volumes are projected to complete the series:

- I. The French in the Champlain Valley: 1609-1760*
- II. The Frontier of Northern New England: 1700-1790*
- III. The Green Mountain Boys: 1770-1791*
- VII. Trade and Transportation: 1800-1900*
- VIII. The Growth of Industry: 1850-1950*
- IX. The Politics of an Agricultural State: 1850-1950*

Volumes are available separately as long as the supply lasts, but one hundred copies of each volume have been set aside to fill orders for complete sets. Already volume ten is exhausted except for set orders. Individuals and libraries may subscribe for the full series, paying for the volumes as issued. 10% discount to set purchasers.

At last, an authoritative history of Vermont:

GROWTH OF VERMONT

IN TEN VOLUMES

EARLE WILLIAMS NEWTON, *Editor*

Now available:

VOLUME IV

VERMONT IN QUANDARY: 1763-1825

by CHILTON WILLIAMSON

Assistant Professor of History, Barnard College

From hitherto unused and undiscovered manuscript sources, Dr. Williamson has drawn a narrative which presents conclusions with regard to the land operations of Ethan Allen and his brothers and the Haldimand Negotiations which are at striking variance to those commonly repeated in the Vermont histories for the last hundred years. Also contrary to his predecessors, the author does not stop at 1791, but weaves a continuous fabric down to 1825, when the opening of the Champlain Canal altered the economy and the political orientation of Vermont.

8 vo., 319 pp., maps and illustr., \$4.50

VOLUME V

MIGRATION FROM VERMONT

by LEWIS D. STILWELL

Professor of History, Dartmouth College

Professor Stilwell's study of the economy of an expanding frontier state which suddenly found itself deserted by its native sons, is a searching investigation into the sources of the American westward movement, as well as of fundamental factors which determined the development of Vermont. Critics have called it "interesting," "well written" and "brilliant," and a "model for similar studies." (Mississippi Valley Hist. Rev.)

8 vo., 200 pp., maps, \$3.00

VOLUME VI

SOCIAL FERMENT IN VERMONT

by DAVID M. LUDLUM

The social history of the years 1790-1850, with particular attention to the origins and character of the "isms" which swept over the state and which were exported by restless Vermonters to New York and the great West. Anti-masonry, anti-slavery, perfectionism, humanitarianism, Millerism and other radical enthusiasms take shape under the author's skillful pen. "Workmanlike and interesting," said the American Historical Review.

8 vo., 305 pp., \$3.00

(Continued on Inside Cover)